Lovely Strange Dark

ULTRABAROQUE DEPROGRAMMER

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CHAPTER 8

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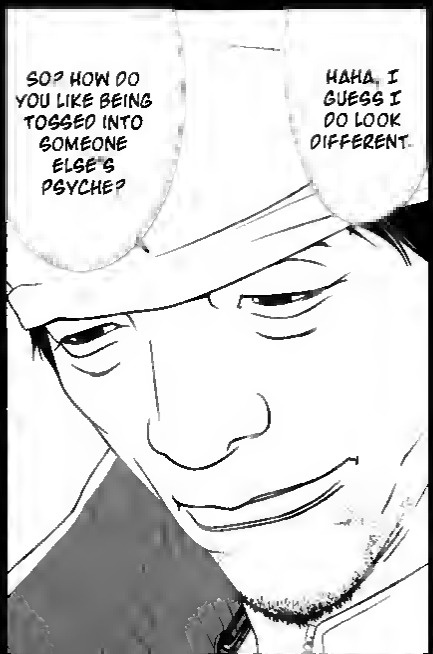
YOU'RE...
REALLY TATEHARA ...?

WHAT'S WRONG?
I
I...


SO? HOW DO YOU LIKE BEING TOSSED INTO SOMEONE ELSE'S PSYCHE?
HAHA, I GUESS I DO LOOK DIFFERENT.

I FEEL SICK...
HEY, DON'T THROW UP!
Almost there...
A little more
and I'll be able to remember how it felt...!

YOU PARTITION YOURSELF INTO THREE
ONE PART OF ME MAINTAINS CONTROL IN THE PHYSICAL WORLD
tap
tap
tap
A TRI-CUT'S EXACTLY WHAT IT SOUNDS LIKE
THAT PART, THE OPERATOR, MANIPULATES THE MIND OF THE SUBJECT
THROUGH WORDS AND MOTIONS
Rustle
THE SECOND PART IS THE "MAIN COMPUTER"

YOU SAID IT YOURSELF. THE SUBJECT'S MIND IS TRANSFORMED INTO A PSI MOVIE SUCH AS THIS ONE.
THE FIGHTER DIVES INTO IT AND RACES THROUGH THIS MINDSCAPE.
THEN YOU JUST DEPROGRAM PER THE CLIENT'S REQUEST.
It analyzes the subject's responses
in both the physical world and sub-conscious one.
THE FINAL PART IS ME HERE.
YOU REMEMBER ALL THOSE SKELETONS FROM BEFORE?
GUYS LIKE THOSE ARE THE MIND'S DEFENDERS. WILL I CALL IT QUITS IF THEY KNOCK ME DOWN?
OR WILL I KEEP GOING ON UNTIL THIS PLACE IS SCORCHED EARTH?
WELL, I COORDINATE IT ALL IN REAL TIME WITH THE PHYSICAL TATEHARA
I'M THE SUBCON-SCIOUS FIGHTER.
THAT'S IN-TERESTING WASHERS DON'T HAVE THAT TECHNIQUE
YEAH, WASHERS ARE JUST THE OPPOSITE.
RIGHT, WASHERS DRAG THE SUBJECT INTO A WORLD OF THEIR OWN MAKING
Splsh
IS PARTI-TIONING YOURSELF INTO THREE PARTS
ANY DIFFERENT FROM MULTIPLE PERSONALI-TIES?

IF YOU'RE ASKING IF WE'RE ARTIFICIALLY CREATING THAT CONDITION, THEN NO, IT'S NOT THE SAME THING.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT I'LL LEAD YOU BACK SAFELY.
If I sent 100% of myself into the psi movie
I'd be helpless if anything happened in the physical world
Just like you are right now.
HUH!?
SSSK

EACH OF THE THREE PARTS HAS A ROLE TO PLAY,
AND WE ALL KEEP TABS ON EACH OTHER
DESTROY THE MIND-SCAPE, AND CRIPPLE THE SUBJECT
BUT WELL, THERE'S ALSO THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE FIGHTER COULD LOSE IT,
NO, I DON'T SMOKE.
PUSH
SO THERE'S THE REAL TATEHARA, THE FIGHTER TATEHARA
AND THE THIRD? WHERE IS HE?

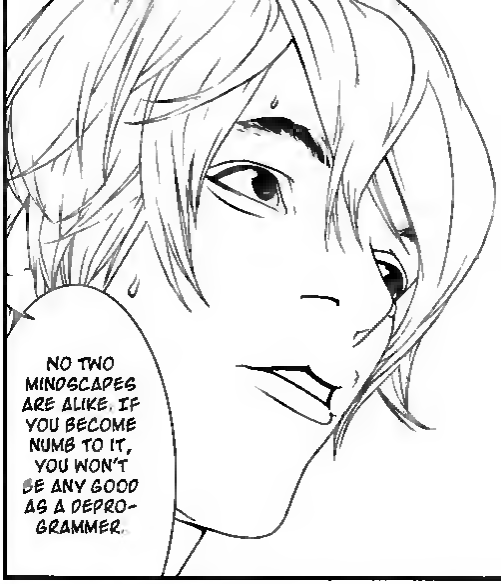
How it feels to cut myself into three without losing myself
That sensation.
The real Tatehara was deleted from my memory.
but I've got a good grasp of what the fighter Tatehara told me.
AS PRAGMATIC AS EVER. YOU SHOULD SAY HELLO TO THE KID.
UM... TATE-HARA
Ignore
DON'T JUST IGNORE HIM.
IT'S NICE TO— HELLO!
POSSIBLE CAMPING TENT DETECTED ONE KILOMETER TO THE SOUTH.
Let me see him.

RUMBLE
Battle
This is it...!

Where?
Where is he?
tap
tap
Rustle
YOU WANNA GO BACK?
I CAN... MANAGE...
YOU OK?
Splash
Splash

WHAT A TERRIBLE PLACE.
Aaa
Aaa
Puh
IS BUILT ON THE CASUALTIES OF WAR AND THE SIGHT OF ANIMALS EATING THE DEAD
THE CONGRESSMAN'S PSYCHE
I'M NOT USED TO IT, EITHER.
I THINK THAT ONCE YOU GET USED TO IT, YOU'RE DONE FOR
THIS FEELING OF DESOLATION JUST CREEPS OVER YOUR HEART... I CAN'T PUT MY FINGER ON IT
EVEN THOUGH THERE'S SO MUCH LIGHT AND WATER AND PLANTS EVERYWHERE

WHETHER YOU SUCCEED OR FAIL AS A DEPROGRAMMER DEPENDS ON THE STRENGTH OF YOUR FIGHTER.
IT ALL DEPENDS ON WHAT'S INSIDE YOU.


NO TWO MINDSCAPES ARE ALIKE. IF YOU BECOME NUMB TO IT, YOU WON'T BE ANY GOOD AS A DEPROGRAMMER.

HERE, TAKE THIS TO HEART.

A GUY LIKE YOU
WILL FIND YOURSELF A GOOD FIGHTER.
A GUY LIKE YOU
WILL FIND YOURSELF A GOOD FIGHTER.
...H...
HEY.

You—heard! down today
YOU'RE, UM... WELL... HIM, RIGHT?
YOU'RE—
ME, AREN'T YOU?
.....
GIMMIE A BREAK! I COULD HARDLY REMEMBER ANYTHING TILL JUST NOW!
TOOK YOU LONG ENOUGH.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE ACTING SO HIGH AND MIGHTY FOR
.....
RUSH
THAT'D BE BECAUSE I WEEDED THROUGH YOUR BURNT MEMORIES AND GRABBED THE GOOD ONES TO AIR OUT
THIS ISN'T THE TIME FOR ME TO BE GARDEN-ING!
YOU COULDA DONE THAT SOONER!
IN PASTRY TERMS, YOU'RE THE OUTER CRUST
YOU JUST TAKE CARE OF THE PHYSICAL STUFF.

I'M ACTING HIGH AND MIGHTY!?
WAIT, PASTRY TERMS!?
IT'S YOUR TATS THAT LOOK LIKE SOME FANCY PASTRY!
I REALLY DON'T GET HOW YOU'RE ME!
IT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE WEAK
THAT I EXIST.
I MADE YOU!
YOU'RE JUST MY MENTAL IMAGE!
CUT THE CRAP!
THINK OF THE TWO OF US AS DIFFERENT PEOPLE
I POSSESS ALL THAT YOU LACK.
GRAB
SON OF A...

CRASH
WHA
!?
.....
...HUH...?
CRASH

IN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION YOU ASKED BEFORE,
YOU AND I AREN'T REALLY ON GOOD TERMS
NEVER HAVE BEEN
WILL FIND YOURSELF A GOOD FIGHTER.
A GUY LIKE YOU

Ultrabaroque Deprogrammer I End